2:Iliff Y-5 (ca.1901) 1954 NT14 Plateau Yumans NT14
Havasupai

We are going to put a stop to this destruction of food, and I am going to learn the reason back of it."

"He say. She hear."

"I'll have E-e brought up too," I told him. "We'll find out why she got into this feud."

Billy turned and walked slowly home, carrying the wilted corn in his hand.

I was so eager to get at the trial and learn why these complacent, childish women were determinedly destroying one another's food, that I forgot this was a school day until the bushes parted. The little folks came through at a comfortable walk and entered the classroom. Vesnor had learned to restrain his impatience, but experience had convinced me by now that if he and his pony were absent, the children would spend the day playing in the creek.

Vesnor, Little Jim, Billy, Prince and the three women were waiting at my office when school was dismissed. I unlocked the door, and they filed in, the women abashed by the formality and frightened by Vesnor's disapproving mien. They had been accustomed to indulging their love of trickery until the time came for physical combat; the victory then went to the one who could scratch and pull hair faster than her antagonist. A hearing in the superintendent's office was something new and quite disturbing.

Since Little Jim was one of the plaintiffs, he was the first to testify. He stated his case briefly: "I go work corn. Little light. Sun no come up. I see Billy squaw, Prince squaw in corn. Make walk on stalk, break down. I see run in bushes. Run to camp." Little Jim sat down, his troubled face creased by an angry frown.

At that moment a woman, her *sutam* floating behind her, breezed through the door and eased her plump body into a chair. She was Vesnor's wife, a giggling woman, much younger than he, whose ears were attuned to gossip. She had come to gather news, first hand, so that she might gleefully dispense it later to an eager audience. This feud had been going on for some time, possibly years, and interest was keen, for word of the trial had swept through the village.

Colliff Y-5 (ca. 1901) 1954 NT14 Plateau Yumans NT14
Havasupai

Billy's wife testified in her own defense. She rose from her chair and moved to the center of the floor with the grace of a shy wild animal. She was slender and lovely, with the clear brown skin, small shapely hands and feet that distinguish the elite. The long bang above her piquant face, the neat, bobbed hair, the colorful *sutaw* over the clean, gay dress made her a picture that would attract attention anywhere. Her face had been artistically decorated for the occasion: a round spot of red paint glowed dully over each cheekbone; a line of burnt sienna extended from the middle of her lower lip to the center of her chin. But most bewitching were the delicate blue shadows beneath her eyes. These were achieved by daintily applying a paint made from the wild indigo plant. Her bracelets, necklace and ear ornaments of blue beads added to her natural charm. She spoke in her native language, Vesnor interpreting, and told her story with such eloquence that I wished with all my heart that I knew enough of the tribe's language to understand her softly spoken words.

She was explaining to me, and her every word and gesture were for my benefit as she said: "Long time ago Little Jim marry my sister. She good woman. She cook. She work, make clean house. He no work. No buy dress. He no buy things eat. She hungry all time. She get sick. She die. Little Jim marry E-e. He happy all time. He work. He no lazy. He buy dress. He buy everythings. I too mad. I walk. I walk on trail. I see Little Jim corn. It little grow (not very tall). I think. E-e like corn. I get plenty mad. I walk, maybe five, maybe ten stalk, break down on ground. I too mad."

Like an angry princess she swept to her seat, and I knew that I was not the right judge for this case, for I was ready to defend her for her courage, her beauty and her loyalty to her dead sister. Yet I admired the straightforwardness and sincerity of Little Jim.

Prince's wife took the floor. The women were sisters, but Billy had chosen the more picturesque, the more charming of the two. This woman's story was less dramatic, but differed little from that of her sister. Little Jim's first wife was her sister, she said. He neglected her, and she died. "Now he good to E-e. I mad. I want

2:Iliff Y-5 (ca.1961) 1964 NT14 Plateau Yumans NT14
Havasupai

578 691 695

to make go hungry. I walk thirty stalks his corn. I plenty mad." She gave E-e a glance loaded with malice and hesitantly took her seat.

Billy stepped forward and voiced his complaint. E-e had cut seven stalks of his corn. He found the stalks lying in the field. He explained that he needed the corn for food for his family. He would not have seed, he could not fill his storehouse, if his crop were destroyed. His face had lost its jovial expression and was puckered with concern.

E-e, the accused, came forward reluctantly. The look of lazy contentment had drained from her face; there was fear in her dark eyes. She spoke haltingly, with many gestures. "I pick up brush." Her quick fingers went through the motions of gathering and piling brush. "I dry. I want fire. Billy's squaw throw brush. Scatter everywhere." Again her fingers spoke, making the gesture of tossing brush to the winds. "I no find. No make fire. No cook bread. She break Little Jim corn. She make brush scatter. I plenty mad. I walk little on corn. I cut little. I too mad."

I managed to keep a straight face, but was chuckling inside. Those precious, mischievous women. They refused to submit to the deadly monotony of their lives, and added a touch of excitement by playing sly tricks, each striving to be more cunning than the other. I wanted to pat them on their plump shoulders and send them happily home, but when a garden is no larger than the floor of a room, and a family depends on it for food, it must not be the pawn in a game.

We discussed their crimes with great seriousness. They were quick to agree that the destruction of food must stop, and they expected to be penalized, but I hadn't the heart to levy against their pitiful possessions. So I asked them, individually, if they would drop the feud and never revive it, if allowed to go unpunished.

They all shouted in their eagerness, *"Eh! Eh, mi!* (Yes! Yes, you say it!)"

The case was dismissed. I heard of no more such pranks, but

Cliff Y-5 (ca. 1901) 1954 NT14 Plateau Yumans NT14
Havasupai

their love of excitement undoubtedly would prompt them to find some other way to keep the village astir and themselves interested.

Long after the dispute was settled, Billy's wife's reiteration, "I too mad," stayed with me. It helped me to appreciate the basic honesty of these children of nature: no soft words covered angry thoughts; no smile hid a broken heart. They expressed their emotions, with zest and energy and, if the occasion required, with violence, as did the Bear, the Coyote and the Deer who, from the Days of Old, had taught the Havasupai the wisdom they themselves had gleaned from the wilderness when time was young.

Hiliff Y-5 (ca. 1901) 1954 NT14 Plateau Yumans NT14
Havasupai

be caught and later exaggerated to entertain relatives and friends.

Walapai Bill's house was a low mound of earth with a door in one end. He was in the yard chopping brush in short lengths for his cooking fire.

"I want Spoonhead's blanket," I told him shortly. My patience was not improved by the fact that I was cold and soaking wet.

"Didn't see blanket," he said, his graying head bent over the wood. "You look my house, you no see blanket."

I pushed open the rickety board door that hung on leather hinges and entered. The dirt floor was worn to a saucerlike depression, the sides sloping to the flat circle in the center. A search did not reveal the blanket, which was too large and too vivid in color to be concealed easily. His wife also had disappeared. I went outside as Vesnor and Spoonhead rode up on their ponies.

With his usual astuteness, Vesnor knew exactly where to find the blanket. He pursed his lips and pointed to the canyon wall. "Over there, I think," he said. "Maybe wife hide 'em in storehouse."

"Bring the woman here," I told him, "and make her bring the blanket."

He sprang through the brush, climbed the talus, and followed a trail on a shelf of rock until trees and shrubs hid him from view. The Indians crowded in, forming a half-circle about the hut, eager to see the culprit brought in.

Vesnor returned, his hard right hand firmly grasping the woman's wrist. She followed, pulling back angrily with each step, the heavy blanket across her shoulder. Her lord and master had ordered her to hide his loot in their granary and she had had no choice but to obey.

I sent the Indians home except those actually involved in the theft. I told the women to give their children food and get them ready for school, then I investigated the affair.

Walapai Bill's cockiness melted rapidly when he was told that he could be sent to jail for theft, and that his interfering with the transportation of the United States mail was no light matter. His

2:Iliff Y-5 (ca.1901) 1954 NT14 Plateau Yumans NT14
Havasupai

fat shoulders slumped and his bold daring changed to indecision. He prized above all else his freedom to go where and when he pleased, so built up his defense.

"Long time ago, I go on mesa. I hunt seeds, nuts; make good food. I hunt rabbits, deer. Gone long time, maybe so many"—he held up four fingers—"moons. Come home, door all break. Somebody go in house, take saddle blanket. Little one. I think Spoonhead steal 'em. That why I steal Spoonhead blanket. He steal me, I steal him. That way Indians do. Make play like little game; little mad, too."

Spoonhead angrily met the accusation, for not all of the truth had been told, and the blame had been shifted to him. "Long time, Walapai Bill, me, gamble. He lose. One dollar. He no pay. I take blanket. Little one. Worth maybe one dollar," he shouted.

Walapai Bill sheepishly admitted the truth of Spoonhead's statement. Each of them was entirely willing to return the other's blanket for they now realized the gravity of the situation. Spoonhead went to his camp and returned with the saddle blanket which he exchanged for his big Navaho. It remained only for Walapai Bill to pay his debt of honor to wipe out the long-standing feud. Unless this were paid, the good-natured pilfering would start all over again. I suggested that he take care of it. I was not sure that he had the money; if he had, where he kept it was a mystery.

He ducked through his doorway, very reluctantly lifted a rug from the center of the floor, dropped to his knees and began digging in the dirt with both hands. He clawed out the hard-packed soil, tossing the dirt back as a dog throws it when digging a burrow. I watched his queer antics in bewilderment, amused at the concentration with which he worked. Then his pudgy, brown fingers scratched metal and he drew from the hole a rusty baking powder can, with the word "Royal" still legible on its paper cover. He twisted and turned the lid until it came free; then, fumbling around inside, he took a silver dollar from the coins in the can. He handed the dollar to me, and the woebegone look on his face told how hard was the parting. I gave the money to Spoonhead,

Hilliff Y-5 (ca. 1901) 1964 NT14 Plateau Yumans NT14
Havasupai

who stuck it in the pocket of his jeans, grunted loudly, mounted his horse and rode off. Now that he had his blanket, he would ride up the trail tomorrow and across the mesa to Seligman, the mail pouch tied to his saddle.

We settled our troubles as they came to us, so the Postmaster General never knew that a game of chance, played several years before, had that day delayed the delivery of the United States mail.

Walapai Bill took the matter seriously when he realized that his crime could have landed him behind bars, and was grateful for the settlement. He offered his hand in friendship, grinned broadly and said, "You ride my horse. I think good you ride him."

The big bay was in a brush corral near the house. His long bony head and long legs reminded me of that dash across the race track on our way to the Grand Canyon. I declined as graciously as possible, for the morning had taken on a new beauty and I wanted to walk home. The fog, that rose nightly from the stream, drifted upward between the red walls, trailing long streamers. The white clouds it formed sailed majestically eastward across the wide strip of blue sky above the village. Rills of sparkling water traced patterns from the stream to the thirsty gardens. The people were tilling the soil, irrigating their crops or eating their early meal.

Kate sat by her outdoor fire, eating toasted sunflower seed from a shallow basket. She grinned at me and I squatted by her fire; its warmth on my cold, wet clothing was something to appreciate. She did not permit my presence to interfere with her breakfast, but scooped up a handful of the crisp seeds, poured them into the right corner of her mouth, moved her jaws for a few seconds, then let an uninterrupted stream of hulls drop from the left corner. Repeatedly she scooped up more seeds, poured them into her mouth without disturbing the outward flow of hulls. It was as mechanical as a gristmill.

"How do you do it, Kate?" I asked, laughing.

She thrust out her tongue. *"It,"* she said, moving her tongue across her mouth from right to left. "You try," she invited, pushing the tray toward me.

Havasupai had traveled to the vicinity of Williams when they sighted an Apache, also on horseback, who had returned to retrieve a bow and arrows he had hidden. The Apache raced away, but his pursuers were too close before he saw them. The Havasupai overtook him, and as they closed in on both sides of the Apache's horse, a Havasupai took a hatchet from his belt and swerved in close enough to land a blow on the Apache's head. The Apache reined his horse, jumped to the ground, and started shooting at the Havasupai, but his bowstring broke. When this happened, he stood awaiting the final blow. One of the Havasupai rode close, swung his hatchet at the man's head, and the Apache fell dead. In anticlimax, informants add that the Apache had been mounted on a stolen Havasupai horse which followed the avenging party home. 721 562

"That old woman was boss of the war party, and she rode right along with the men all the way, even when they killed the Apache," an informant asserted. "She was there when they killed him, but she didn't kill the man herself." It is uncertain whether she actually attempted to, or did, strike any blows at the quarry. Death of the one Apache satisfied the revenge party, which, in fact, probably realized that they would have sustained injuries or deaths themselves had they overtaken the main Apache party.

Special testimony or Advice.

In recording testimony regarding former extent of Havasupai hunting territory preparatory to presenting their case in court, the Havasupai have consulted old women along with old men. This probably was done at the instigation of the law firm engaged by the tribe. 695

Under aboriginal circumstances, it is doubtful whether old women were very frequently consulted on matters concerning the tribe as a group. Most disputes probably were between segments of the tribe or between families. When land disputes arose, it appears that the council of chiefs was consulted if the matter could not be decided otherwise. In this instance, old women would almost never have played a role. On the other hand, if a disagreement were simply argued between families, and women happened to be among the senior members on either side, it is quite possible that they would have taken part in the matter whether or not they were consulted. 695 578 562

At the present time, women in middle age or older are consulted on matters of relationship if marriage is the subject. This is especially true if the woman in question is of advanced age or is reputed to have a good memory. Adult women of any age do not hesitate to add their voices to the cry of public disapproval which arises when any couple attempts to make what is considered an improper marriage. 888 602 582 562

Women play a prominent part in passing on the body of approved social behavior to coming generations, especially in the training of their own sex. 867 562